

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
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Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Your state's school health policies:
nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State_Policy.asp



Grades 6 to 8 • Health Problems Series

Obesity

We live in a world filled with screen time and fast food, so it's no surprise that the percentage of overweight children is on the rise. The following discussion questions and activities will help your students learn more about how to be fit and healthy.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Kids:

What Being Overweight Means

KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/fit/overweight.html

What's the Right Weight for Me?

KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/fit/fat_thin.html

Is Dieting OK for Kids?

KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/diet.html

Be a Fit Kid

KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/fit/fit_kid.html

Go, Slow, and Whoa! A Kid's Guide to Eating Right

KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/go_slow_whoa.html

Articles for Teens:

Obesity

KidsHealth.org/teen/food_fitness/dieting/obesity.html

What's the Right Weight for My Height?

KidsHealth.org/teen/food_fitness/dieting/weight_height.html

The Deal With Diets

KidsHealth.org/teen/food_fitness/dieting/dieting.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. Lots of people believe that too much screen time can get in the way of a healthy lifestyle. Do you agree? Why or why not? How can you incorporate your TV, computer, or video game screen into an active life?
2. What are some creative ways that you can incorporate exercise into your day that don't involve joining a team?
3. How do you make choices about what you eat? What factors do you consider when making food decisions? What's most important to you, and why? How do food decisions affect your health?



Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Thwart the Evil Dr. Strangediet!

Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn about positive health behaviors associated with a nutritious diet and exercise
- Discover the risks of an unhealthy lifestyle
- Design a plan for maintaining personal health

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Dr. Strangediet's Health Plan handout (available at: KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/conditions/obesity_handout1.pdf)
- Pen and paper or computer word processing program

Class Time:

45 minutes

Activity:

Dr. Strangediet has just published a hot new book that's flying off the shelves of local bookstores. When you check it out, you are amazed to discover what Dr. Strangediet proposes to keep kids healthy (see handout). You decide to take matters into your own hands and deliver a public service announcement on the radio to get the word out about Dr. Strangediet's warped view. Using the articles at KidsHealth for information, design a public service announcement that addresses the following topics:

- The health risks of following a plan like Dr. Strangediet's
- An alternative to Dr. Strangediet's plan
- Support for why your plan is healthier than Dr. Strangediet's

Extensions:

1. Although Dr. Strangediet's health plan doesn't seem very appealing, many people follow unhealthy diets and exercise plans. Role-play with a partner a discussion with a friend on a dangerous diet.
2. Now that you've examined Dr. Strangediet's plan, analyze some real-life diets and weight-loss products like supplements or weight-loss pills. Based on what you've learned at KidsHealth, discuss why these products might be dangerous, especially for kids. You can even invite a nutritionist to class for an expert opinion.
3. So you've written a public service announcement about a healthy diet and exercise plan - now evaluate your personal plan! Take some time to jot down how you incorporate healthy food choices and exercise into your life. What are your strengths? How could you improve?



Conscientious in the Cafeteria

Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn about the components of a healthy diet
- Analyze the nutritional value of the school cafeteria menu
- Advocate for healthy food choices

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- School cafeteria menu
- Pen and paper or computer word processing program

Class Time:

1 ½ hours

Activity:

Stop! Before you bypass the carrots for a second helping of mac and cheese in your cafeteria line, think nutrition! Your lunch should be giving you the pep you need to think smart and play hard for the rest of the afternoon, so you need to invest some thought into what you're putting into your body. Check out the articles on KidsHealth for guidelines to help you evaluate the items on the menu in your school's cafeteria. What options do you think are the healthiest? What areas do you think are lacking? Discuss your findings, and as a class, decide on the one nutrition change that you think would make the biggest difference in creating a healthy lunch for students in your school. Then make your voice heard! Write a petition to the principal that proposes your change, and use evidence to back up your opinion. Your cafeteria might become the most nutritious place around, thanks to you!

Extensions:

1. Take a closer look at one of your family's favorite dinners, and determine how you could make it healthier. You can even take a trip to the grocery store to shop for the items that you need.
2. It's hard to think about healthy food choices when you're so busy with homework, lacrosse practice, and hanging out at the mall. But what you eat makes a big difference in how you feel! Keep a food log for several days, writing down everything that you eat. Then compare your food choices with what's recommended in the food guide pyramid.

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Dr. Strangediet's Health Plan

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/conditions/obesity_handout1.pdf



Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Develop a public service announcement that addresses the health risks of following a plan like Dr. Strangediet's. Include an alternative to Dr. Strangediet's plan as well as support for why your plan is healthier.

Dr. Strangediet's Health Plan

Dr. Strangediet says: "Follow my plan, and you'll be the healthiest kid on the block!"

1. Green beans are good for you! Eat green beans (and only green beans) at every meal, every day. If you must have a snack, you can have some more green beans.
2. Drink fruit juice whenever you're thirsty. You should have at least 10 glasses per day of fruit juice. There's no value to drinking water. More than half of the weight of your body is water, so you don't need any more of it.
3. Conserve your energy by moving as little as possible throughout the day. Limit any exercise to less than 10 minutes per day. It's important not to exhaust yourself.
4. Looking at a screen (TV, computer, video game) is good for your health because it develops your eyesight and helps you conserve energy (see point #3). Try to maximize your screen time during the day, and clock in at least 5 hours daily.

When evaluating Dr. Strangediet's health plan, keep the following questions in mind:

- Is it good to eat only one kind of food, even if it is a healthy food? Why or why not?
- What does water help the body do? Do you need to drink water, even though your body is made up of a lot of water?
- Why is it important for your body to stay active?
- How can sitting in front of a screen affect your health?

